The Seed Sower.

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Hymn.

Dear Father, when the way looks dark,
When doubts and care encompass me,
One thought sustains and gives me strength,—
The thought of thee!

Though disappointments chill the heart,
And oft the task comes wearily,
Still I press on with confidence,—
Thou art with me!

Each step along life's thorny road
In thy companionship may be,
To take each day in trust,—this is
Thy plan for me!

And may I feel thy plan is best,
Though often why I cannot see,
Nor look beyond, but simply leave
The end to thee!

To do thy will whatever comes
Till death at last shall set me free,—
O Love Divine! at last the hope
To be with thee.

CLARA THORNDIKE ENDICOTT.

"When it was Dark."

(A Sermon for Eastertide by the Rev. C. Hargrove, M.A.)

"*But some doubted.*"—MATTHEW xxviii., 17.

With these words the Evangelist concludes what he had to tell of the appearances of Jesus to his disciples after his resurrection. And the last eleven verses which form an appendix to the Gospel of Mark contain three statements of the unbelief of the disciples. When Mary Magdalen told them "that he was alive and had been seen of her they disbelieved." When two of themselves declared that he had been manifested unto them, "as they walked on their way into the country; neither believed they them." "And afterward he was manifested unto the eleven as they sat at meat; and he upbraided them with their unbelief, because they believed not them which had seen him after he was risen."

Later still, as Paul tells us, there were among the Corinthian Christians some who said "that there is no resurrection of the dead," and as Dean Stanley writes "these impugners of the Resurrection remained within the Christian Society; and their position was not deemed, either by themselves or by the Apostle as necessarily imcompatible with

the profession of Christianity." Indeed, Paul himself makes no distinction between the appearances of Jesus to the earlier disciples and the vision which he had on the way to Damascus, when as he writes to the Galatians, "it pleased God to reveal his son *in me.*" Of that vision we have three accounts in the Acts of the Apostles, which all agree in this that it was of the nature of a great light in the presence of which he fell to the ground; and then a voice, which those who journeyed with him did not hear at all or only heard as an unintelligible sound, reached him, "Saul, Saul," it said, "why persecutest thou me."

We may believe that it was in very truth the voice of the living Jesus, which has spoken to the souls of thousands since, and still speaks to-day to many "weary and heavy-laden" one such as in his earthly lifetime he called to him. Very loth will those be who trust God as He did to set it all down as a mere delusion of the senses, but however real it may have been, it does not bear upon the question of the bodily resurrection. The glory which shone round about him was not that of a human body, the voice which he alone heard was not uttered from heaven by our organs of speech. And if the appearances to the others were of the like nature there was then and there still remains place for doubt.

But before long the doubts, or at least the doubters, were silenced. It came to be recognised as an essential part of the Christian faith that, as the Article of the Church of England puts it, "Christ did truly rise again from death, and took again his body, with flesh, bones, and all things appertaining to the perfection of man's nature." True, it is not so expressed in the early creeds, which are content with the simple statement "The third day he rose again from the dead." But no liberty of interpretation was tolerated, and to this day it is generally regarded as a sin to entertain any doubt as to what became of the dead body of the Crucified.

"But some doubted" and some disbelieved: and some doubt, some disbelieve still. It is in vain to insist, as eminent divines constantly do, that "taking all the evidence together, it is not too much to say that there is no single historic incident better or more variously supported than the Resurrection of Christ," and that "it is difficult to conceive more overwhelmingly strong evidence."

If it were so all honest and intelligent men would be agreed, nor should we find a distinguished scholar who declares himself convinced from his studies of the Gospels "of the reality of the resurrection of the body of Jesus," writing "yet I cannot say that the evidence is historically so strong that it is temerity to question it. However much we may regret the situation we must make the best of it. If the doctrine of the Resurrection of Jesus must rest upon the accuracy of the observation of the act of physical resurrection, it has slight historical support" (*Dr. C. A. Briggs, Loisy and his Critics, Expositor, April*, 1905).

The obstinacy of doubt is generally accounted for on the ground of prejudice against the supernatural. It would be easy to retort that the prejudice is on the side of those whose interests in this life and (as they believe) in the other world are bound up with acceptance of the popular belief. They have been taught from childhood that this is the Christian faith, "which except a man believe faithfully he cannot be saved." Doubt is sin, and disbelief is apostasy and worst of sins, and the best and holiest who would cheerfully sacrifice income and position for the truth dare not admit that there is another side to the question, lest they be guilty before God.

But prejudice is right and rational as a demand for the fullest evidence when statements are made of facts which transcend all human experience. We have no right to say of anything that it is impossible, for our ignorance is great and the limits of the possible are not known to us. But it is our right and our duty not to accept what is extraordinary and outside of human experience without convincing proof.

Temptations to unbelief! The temptations are all the other way. It is so much pleasanter to go with the multitude than to walk apart, so much easier to agree with the great majority than to stand alone. If belief were a matter of choice, as we choose what pattern of clothes we shall wear, all of us

except a very few eccentrics would believe alike, just as we do all dress nearly alike.

But Truth is quite independent of our likings, or feelings, or advantages, or bringing up, and it is to Truth alone our loyalty is due.

"Some doubted." Some still doubt. So much is Fact; and neither confident assertions of the unreasonableness of doubt, nor denunciations of the doubters will explain it away. That cannot be so absolutely certain which to numbers of honourable and intelligent scholars seems uncertain or unfounded.

It is surely wiser to face the fact as evidence of the possibility at least that the Churches may be found to have been mistaken on this matter, and that the body of Jesus did not in truth come to life again. If it should be so, what would be the consequences?

Let us suppose then that the doubters of that day are shown to be in the right. They were wise not to believe, and the world has come round to their side. Let us suppose that it has come to be admitted that there was no guard set about the tomb, and no earthquake and no mighty angel descending from heaven. The body of Jesus hastily buried on the Friday night was removed by Joseph of Arimathæa or another, and around the empty tomb gathered all the legends which grew up about his having come back in the flesh and eating and drinking with his disciples. A lively faith that the Master was really living, though removed from sight, took possession of his disciples, and hence arose the stories how he "was seen" of this one and that, had been seen even "of five hundred brethren at once." Eyes of the soul spiritually illumined saw what to eyes of the flesh was invisible, just as Paul saw and heard what to his companions meant nothing, was perhaps just lightning and a thunder clap. And so in all the accounts of the Resurrection it is implied that Jesus was seen of none but those who believed, that is to say, He was known by faith not by sight.

Such an explanation of that belief in the Resurrection which took so strong a hold of the first disciples, and through them has been communicated to all the following generations of Christian folk, is at least possible. The doubt which besets the stories of a risen body, eating and drinking and offering itself to be felt and handled, is at least not irrational or eccentric as would be the doubt whether Jesus was ever crucified.

Suppose some new discovery which set the matter beyond dispute, some official letter or inscription or document or treatise which made it certain that the body of Jesus did not come to life again.

The hypothesis has been taken to construct the plot of a recent shilling novel, which has had a very wide circulation. The book would have taken its place with the many stories of its kind which make a passing sensation, are on sale at all the railway bookstalls, are read and talked of and presently forgotten; nor should I have noticed it here but that it has attained a sort of religious notoriety and theological importance by reason of the commendation bestowed upon it from the pulpit of Westminster Abbey and by the good Bishop of London.

"I wonder," he said, and the publishers have very wisely printed his words on the paper cover of the book, "whether any of you have read that remarkable work of fiction, 'When it was Dark.' It paints what *it seems to me the world would be* if the Resurrection might be supposed never to have occurred. . . . When you see how darkness settles down upon the human spirit you thank God that it is light because of the awful darkness when it was dark."

Let us briefly glance at this story, approved as its moral is by so distinguished a prelate.

In the course of excavations carried out at Jerusalem under the auspices of the Palestine Exploration Fund, an inscription comes to light over a long buried tomb of the first century which, translated into English, reads as follows:—

I, Joseph of Arimathæa, took the body of Jesus the Nazarene from the tomb where it was first laid and hid it in this place.

After full investigation by a committee of the world's most famous archæological experts, who pronounce it genuine, it is generally accepted and published for the information of all readers.

The effect is represented as tremendous. "The morning was big with shadow and gloom. A shudder passed over the country. Certain telegrams which appeared in the papers struck a chill of fear to the very hearts of all who read them. It was as though a great and ominous bell had begun to toll over the world. The faces of people in the streets were universally pale. Hundreds of thousands of Christian men and women were chilled almost to spiritual death."

Presently riots break out in Jerusalem, Turkish soldiers are called in to keep the peace, but this was only the beginning of troubles. War breaks out in the East, and a reign of hell and chaos is established on earth. All moral ties are loosed. Crime multiplies three-fold, especially crimes of lust and violence. "In London gentlemen were going from their clubs to their houses at night carrying pistols and sword sticks." In America "a wave of lawlessness and fierce riot was passing over the country, and the legislation was paralysed." In Australia a great prelate reports that "morals are treated with contempt by youths and maidens, spat upon and cursed by a degraded populace." Slavery is re-established in South Africa, the laws against polygamy are repealed in Utah. The peasantry of Russia are inflamed with rage against England; revolt and hatred and contempt stir the masses in India against our rule. Religious fanaticism, Christian and Mahomedan and Buddhist threaten to overwhelm civilisation. To sum up all in a quotation which the author supposes to be taken from a great London daily. "The terrible seriousness of the situation need hardly further be insisted on here. Its reality cannot be more vividly indicated than by the statement of a single fact," and then follows in capital letters, "Consols are down to sixty-five." A statement which really comes as a relief, and convinces one that the terrible situation has been grossly exaggerated.

Alone amid the general dismay of Christian people the Unitarians enjoy a great triumph. "A tremendous life and energy pulsated within their chapels. Policemen stand at the doors to prevent the entrance of any further people into the overcrowded buildings." Large placards put out by them announce "The Downfall of Christianity." And as proof that they had not only abjured the Christianity of their fathers and rejoiced in the overthrow of the belief in and bodily resurrection which Priestley and generations of Unitarians upheld, but had moreover in their mad delight abandoned even the common sense and regard for truth with which they had aforetimes been credited, they start a monster subscription to reward the discoverer of the inscription, whose only merit was his good luck!

Such and much more of the same kind is, according to our author, what would befall the world if such a discovery were made. And the Bishop, who we hope had not read the book, gives his approval of it. Would it really be so? Does the religion of the Christian world rest upon a foundation so unsure that it is liable to be upset by a skilfully forged or even by a genuine inscription? And is the established order of the world so dependent upon orthodox faith that if one article be discredited ruin would overtake the race, that the amity of nations, respect for law, for life, for liberty, for marriage, that even an enlightened self-interest would all perish together in a welter of despair and passion?

If so, the good rector of the story is surely right when he confesses to his great millionaire opponent, the champion of free thought, "If I had the power I should cheerfully execute you or imprison you for life, not out of revenge but as a precautionary measure. You should have no further opportunity of doing harm." If religion and morality, and peace and prosperity, and law and order, and all virtue and happiness rest upon a certain belief, it will be necessary to guard that belief from peril, and the life and liberty of the few individuals who would assail it should count for nothing when such tremendous issues are at stake.

But on what foundation does the belief of the Bishop and of the Novelist rest?

The human race existed for thousands of years before Christ. This doctrine of the Resurrection was unknown. Was the world then utterly lost? Were Jew and Gentile alike in the darkness, and was the condition of our race so utterly desperate as it is described in this book?

There are at the present time hundreds of millions in the East who are ignorant of Christianity, and have never heard of the story of the Resurrection. Our Buddhist and Mahomedan and Parsee fellow subjects, our Japanese allies, are they all so wicked and miserable?

Moreover, there are tens of thousands in England and America, in Hungary, all over the world who claim to be Christians, but do not believe in the bodily resurrection of Jesus. Are these the kind of people of whom crime, and disorder, and immorality, and recklessness are expected? They may be guilty of the sins of infidelity and heresy and schism, but can it be pretended that the issue of their unbelief is a bad life?

In my copy of this book is an advertisement of another novel issued by the same publishers, and casting my eye down it I read: This is a story of the twelfth century, 'that period of anarchy and wickedness, that lawless and evil time of which the monkish historian wrote 'Christ and all His angels seemed asleep.'" But this was in what are rightly enough called "The Ages of Faith!" It was the time when all Europe sent her sons to redeem the Sepulchre of Christ out of the hands of the Turks; it was a time when doubt was a crime and denial of any article of the faith was punished by torture and death. Assuredly the belief of that day did not save the world from anarchy and wickedness, and the widespread unbelief of this does not make ours a lawless and evil time.

The inscription, says the story, was discovered to be a fraud. But suppose the contrary had happened, what then? It is curious that the author has completely answered himself. He prints a supposed article from an orthodox Protestant organ, which his favourite priest read "with anger and contempt." But all the same it is sound Christianity and good common sense. The writer has hitherto believed as other "Evangelical Christians," but after mature consideration he is brought to acknowledge that he has been in error. He is neither demoralised nor dismayed as others. "A simple inscription," he writes, "has taught us the full meaning of Paul's mysterious words, 'Yea, though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now henceforth know we him no more.' The spiritual body that manifested the resurrection of Jesus has too long been identified with the natural body that was piously laid to rest by Joseph." And much else too long to quote.

How much of Christianity were lost if the body of Jesus was not raised? Would it affect his teaching? Would it alter the record of his life? Would it even diminish from his real triumph over death and the grave in the faith and devotion of his disciples?

"Verily this man was a son of God the officer who stood beside the Cross when he died is reported to have exclaimed. Would he have altered his opinion when he learnt that the dead body had not come to life?

"It is the spirit that quickeneth." It is the spirit of Jesus which has touched the hearts of men and moved them to kind affections and good works which doctrines, however liberal or however orthodox, are powerless to effect.

The Resurrection which concerns us, which we celebrate to-day, does not depend upon documents liable to be upset by the results of diggings among the foundations of Jerusalem or in the dust heaps of Egypt. It is not of a long-buried past, but of the present we sing "Jesus Christ is risen to-day." He lives in the hearts of men influenced by his example and teaching; he reproduces his own life in every age and in manifold form; he lives wherever through his influence right and love are triumphant over hatred and wrong.

If Jesus is not risen for us, in us, then it matters little whether he rose in the body or did not. The story of the past has no importance for us except in so far as it influences us to-day. The body of Jesus rose, or did not rise from the dead 1875 years ago. What matters it? Does He live to-day? Are men gentler, wiser, better? Are women braver, stronger, truer? Are children more regarded, the poor and weak more considered? Is Love fuller and mightier in the world to-day because of Him? Then He lives indeed. His triumph is set above doubt. It belongs not to history but to experience. Its record is not carved on stone or preserved on undated

parchments. It is written in the hearts of men, of women, who love and revere him as Brother, Master, and Lord. For such "the Lord is risen indeed," and "risen to-day."

Ruskin's Creed.

I trust in the living God, Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth and of all things and creatures visible and invisible. I trust in the kindness of his law and the goodness of his work. I will strive to love him and keep his law and see his work while I live. I trust in the nobleness of human nature, in the majesty of its faculties, the fulness of its mercy, and the joy of its love. And I will strive to love my neighbor as myself, and, even when I cannot, will act as if I did I will not kill or hurt any living creature needlessly, nor destroy any beautiful thing, but will strive to save and comfort all gentle life and guard and perfect all natural beauty on earth. I will strive to raise my own body and soul daily into all the higher powers of duty and happiness, not in rivalship or contention with others, but for the help, delight, and honor of others and for the joy and peace of my own life.

Forward.

Push on and make the toil intense,
Nor think of recompense.
Rejoice! 'Tis thine the radiant right to live,
To love and give.
Rejoice! Upon thy life of toil,
Thy sons shall rise a man's height from the soil.
Rejoice, be ever young,
Let only song of hope and joy be sung.
For fellow-man toil on, nor look behind;
Look up amid the strife
To that serener life,
And guidance find.
Be brave! The brave heart dares,
Beats down the bar of Fate and onward fares,—
Right onward fares to nobler domes than these,
To wider harbours and to safer seas.

The Life and the Creed.

In all human affairs, life comes first: theories, explanations, systems, and creeds come afterward. Something real appears, after speculations about the reality, and discovery of its uses. The order of nature is first life, then rules of living; first wealth, then the law of property; first political action, then political economy. Society comes before sociology, mental activity precedes psychology, and religious experience was common to men ages before the creeds were made. At the beginning of things no one tried to forecast the course of society and human experience; but, after innumerable things had happened and many notable experiences had been recorded, wise men and women set them in order, wrought them into poetry and art, explained them in their philosophies, and crystallized them in theology and forms of government. Then they began to put the second things first, and continued the practice until in our time the majority are attempting out of political economy to produce the State, out of sociology to create a well-ordered society, out of psychology to generate mental power, and out of creeds to bring the bud and blossom of religious experience.

For twenty-five years now these processes have been coming into use, with good results of many kinds, and yet with a suspicion, which now becomes a conviction, that all this valuable secondary knowledge has been largely misplaced. Already the warning has gone out that teachers may use all the arts of the psychologist and never come in contact with the minds of their pupils, that sociologists labour in vain when they strive to create a living organism in a valley of dry bones, that political economy is a vain thing in a nation of which the citizens do not desire and will not work for good government, and that creeds deaden the souls of men if they precede the experiences which they were made to explain.

By common consent of clear-sighted observers in all churches, this is a period of pause and hesitancy in the religious world. The old trellises are down, and the vines seem to perish for lack of training and support. But we believe that this period of suspense

indicates, not less faith, but only a seeming weakness caused by taking away the artificial supports of faith. Men thought they had religious experience because they believed the creeds. When they no longer accept them, they misinterpret the sense of loss, forgetting that the experience of religion was the reality which the creed was set to explain. The creed, whether long or short, compound and complicated, or simple as the Golden Rule, is nothing but an attempt to state in orderly fashion that which a man has learned by his experience. If the creed gives a true account of the nature of experience, it will be confirmed in many ways. If it is incomplete, it will be corrected. If it is false, it will be thrown aside. Meanwhile man will go on gaining new impulses of life and deeper inspirations according to the measure of his fidelity and the breadth and depth of the stream of right purpose and noble action that flows through his days. As he lives, he thinks; and out of his living, if he thinks in quietness and freedom, come new and larger affirmations. Often those who live most truly, and act from the deepest impulses of a vigorous soul, are not much given to introspection, are not practised in the ways of orderly thought, and could give no good account of that which rules their action and fills their days with light. But their generous living and beautiful deeds furnish to the annalist and the system-maker that which is needed for the writing of religious history and the shaping of creeds. We believe that the time is now at hand when in all the churches there will be a new revival of religion, connected not at all with questions concerning orthodoxy of belief or fidelity to logic, but springing out of a great trust in human nature, and a longing to see it expand in proportion to the process of change and growth which is visible in every other department of life and realm of the natural world. Man cannot properly live his life upon the earth, in this time of enlightenment, unless he walks forth into the world a free soul, conscious that he was made to create and to command, and that as a spirit in a spiritual world his fortune is allied to the creative power of Him in whom we live and move and have our being.

Astronomical Notes for June and July.

The nights are so short in these two months that comparatively little star-gazing is done, except by professional astronomers. The brilliant group of constellations which illuminated the sky in the early months of the year has almost entirely disappeared. The most conspicuous objects are Arcturus and Mars, both of a ruddy colour. Arcturus, the brightest of all the stars north of the equator, is to be seen a little south of the zenith. Mars is a long way below Arcturus, and passes the south at about a quarter past nine in the middle of June, and a quarter past seven in the middle of July.

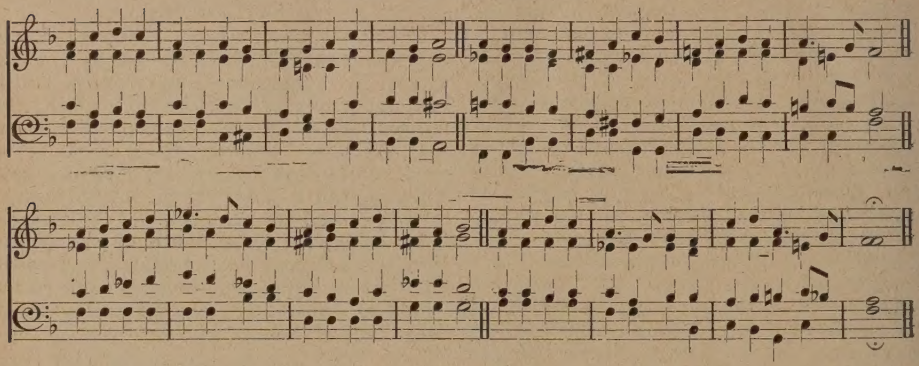
Entreaties.

If thou at any time shouldst want a friend,
To cheer thee in thy weary walk through life,
To speak for thee, or aid thee in distress,
And, in thy brightest moods, to laugh with thee,
To guard thee from the slanderous tongues of men,
To stand by thee, and all thy burdens share,
To soothe thee when, in strife to gain the end,
Thy heart breaks down in sorrow: Then bethink
Thyself of one whose strength is never spent
When in thy cause 'tis given, whose love for thee
Will bear forgetfulness, distrust, and scorn,
And, strong beyond all other changeful loves,
Will still be thine when earthly things are past.
O friend, so loved! I ask no more than this:
That it shall always be as it has been
With thee and me; that thou remember not
My weakness and mistrust, and only know
My love for thee shall last beyond all time

FAITH in God as goodness inspires faith in ourselves, and, therefore, hope that we are made for something, meant for something, and that by perseverance we can accomplish something. Thus faith in God is the root and the strength of all sure hope.—*James Freeman Clarke.*

Who will say the world is dying?

(From "The New Hymnal.") GRANVILLE BANTOCK.



m Who will say the world is dying?
Who will say our prime is past?
f Sparks from Heaven within us lying,
Flash, and will flash till the last.
m Fools! who fancy Christ mistaken;
Man a tool to buy and sell;
Earth a failure, God-forsaken,
Anteroom of Hell.

f Still the race of Hero-spirits
Pass the lamp from hand to hand;
m Age from age the Words inherits,
'Wife and Child and Fatherland';

f Still the youthful hunter gathers
Fiery joy from wold and wood;
He will dare as dared his fathers,
Give him cause as good.

m While a slave bewails his fetters;
While an orphan pleads in vain;
While an infant lisps his letters,
Heir of all the ages' gain;
While a hope awaits the morrow;
p While a moan from man is wrung;
m Know, by every joy and sorrow,
f That the world is young.

C. KINGSLEY.

Unexpected Answers.

Nothing takes a questioner so much aback as an entirely unexpected reply, especially if, as is generally the case, there be some degree of truth in it. He must have all his wits about him to answer offhand; but in nine cases out of ten he is unable to do so. No class of men seem to be so liable in this respect as school inspectors. It might be concluded that constant experience would teach them to be ready for such answers, and to profit by them; but whether this is so, is not chronicled. We think not.

In a Sixth Standard examination, a vacuum was described as 'an empty space without anything in it;' and a compass, according to another genius, was 'a tripod with a round or circular box surmounting it, which always points due north.' This reminds us of the very sensible answer returned by a candidate in a Civil Service examination to the question, 'How far is the sun from the earth?' but which, we fear, did not increase his chances of passing. 'I don't know,' he wrote; 'but it's so far, that it will never interfere with my performing my duties if I am appointed.'

The girls are not a whit behind, or before, the boys in these malapropos answers. For example, when a little girl was asked the reason why the Israelites made a golden calf, she replied: ''Cause they hadna as muckle siller as would mak' a coo.' Another Scotch girl, at an examination, gave a pretty defini-

tion when asked, 'What does patience mean?' —'Wait a wee an' dinna weary.' During a School Board examination in the west of Scotland, the examiner asked a little girl, 'What is meant by, He was amply rewarded?' —'Pair for't—'No, no. You are quite wrong. Suppose you were to go into a baker's shop and buy a half-quarter loaf, and lay down fourpence, would you say you had amply rewarded the baker?' Unhesitatingly the little girl replied in the affirmative. 'Why?'—'Because the loaf's only twopence-three-farthings,' was the unlooked-for answer. The inspector let that girl off easily during the remainder of the lesson.

A little fellow was sent a message by his mother to a lady. When he had delivered it, he did not seem in a hurry to go; and the lady, noticing this, asked him if there was anything else his mother had bidden him say. She was not prepared for his reply: 'She said I wasna to seek onything for coming, but if ye gave me onything, I was to tak' it.'

Sunday-school stories are sometimes equal to others in their irresistible fun. Sacred things have an influence over the mind of youth; but occasionally, as in the two following anecdotes, the influence or temptation is too strong for the mischief-loving boys, and ventually overcomes their religious feelings for the time. A Sunday-school teacher asked her scholars to learn an appropriate text to say as they gave in their pennies to the next collection. The first was, 'He that giveth to the poor lendeth to the Lord;' and all were right until it came to the last boy, who, reluctantly dropping his penny into the box, said, to the great amazement of teachers and scholars, 'The fool and his money are soon parted!'

As an example of the error of talking figuratively to those who do not appreciate, and who are apt to take everything literally, this story is worth reading. The respected superintendent of a Sunday school had told his boys that they should endeavour to bring their neighbours to the school, saying that they should be like a train—the scholar being the engine, and his converts the carriages. Judge of his surprise when, next Sunday, the door opened during lessons, and a little boy, making a noise like an engine, ran in, followed by half-a-dozen others in single file at his back! He came to a halt before the superintendent, who asked the meaning of it all. The naive answer was: 'Please, sir, I'm the engine, and them's the carriages.'

From America come the following, which no doubt are as authentic as such stories usually are. A teacher in Virginia, during a geography lesson, asked a boy the name of the State he lived in. He was pretty right when he replied: 'A state of sin and misery.' Somewhat astonished was another when he heard, in answer to the question, 'Who killed Abel?' that it was General Jackson. It must have been one of these boys who, when asked, 'In what state was mankind after the fall?' answered: 'In the State of Vermont.'

A father said: 'Bill, if you had your due, you'd get a good whipping.'—'I know, daddy; but bills are not always paid when due.' Equally clever was a boy hearing of the wonders of astronomy. 'Men have learned the distances of the stars,' his father said; 'and, with their spectroscopes, found out what they are made of.' 'Yes,' was the reply; 'and isn't it strange, pa, how they found out their names also?'

Leaving juvenile answers, and turning to those of grown-up persons, we find that they are naturally more clever and sharp. Perhaps the best is that told at the expense of the Irish Chief-justice Caulfield, who was very miserly. Only on one occasion did he have a dinner-party, and among the guests was the rector of the parish. This gentleman, being asked to return thanks at the conclusion of the dinner, referred in the following manner to the well-known parsimony of the host:

We thank the Lord, for this is nothing less
Than the fall of manna in the wilderness;
In the house of famine we have found relief,
And known the comforts of a round of beef;
Chimneys have smoked that never smoked before,
And we have dined where we shall dine no more.

The Chief-justice stifled his feelings, and laughed with the rest; but he thought he had his revenge in asking the clergyman to dinner on a subsequent day. He came; but, when the covers were taken off, the dishes were empty! Caulfield maliciously asked the rector to say grace; and he, dumbfounded only for a moment, rose and said:

May He who blessed the loaves and fishes
Look down upon these empty dishes;
For if they do our stomach fill,
'Twill surely be a miracle.

Another legal luminary was as severely dealt with at the hands of a young lady noted for her sharp wit. The judge, whose personal appearance was as unprepossessing as his intellect was keen and his judgment fair, asked this female what she meant by the term 'humbugged.'—'Well, my lord,' replied the lady, angry at the interruption, 'I can hardly know how to explain it; but if a young lady called your lordship a handsome man, she would be humbugging you.'

Even sharper was the epigrammatic reply of a young lady to an *old* admirer, who, having found her glove, returned it to her with the following distich:

If from your glove you take the letter G,
Your glove is love, which I devote to thee.

The old gentleman's name was Page; and he received the following unexpected answer, which chagrined him so much that he left the place:

If from your Page you take the letter P,
Your Page is age, and that won't do for me.

The Children of our Churches.

By A. E. Clephan.

Part II.

We all know that little children naturally take all that goes on around them for granted — the church of their childhood included: but there always comes the time, sooner or later, according to individual development, when children cease to take things for granted—they begin to observe, to note differences, and to question. When they reach that stage they begin to need definite, instead of—or in addition to—general religious instruction. And is it not just here that both in our home life and our school life is the weak link in the chain of our Unitarian training? It is well for those parents who have studied or thought out their own position clearly enough to be ready to enter into the questionings of the growing minds of their children, and who have mastered the necessary problem of how to lay the truest foundation of free religious belief in the young minds, without placing undue stress on those points of orthodoxy from which we differ so fundamentally. When once Unitarian principles are to be taught definitely, it is clear that young thinkers must be made acquainted with the points of difference between orthodoxy and heterodoxy, if they are to grasp the "rationale" of freedom of religious thought, and all that is implied in the opposing influences of *authority* and *freedom* in religious exercise. There is, possibly, a natural fear amongst us of the narrowing effect of definite instruction on points of religious differences—we feel that the stress must be laid on the deeper unity of all sections of the religious world, and not on their differences. That is true enough when we are once clear in our own minds as to what we really do think and believe—which young people, of course, are not. We all have to learn the meaning of *limit*, before we can pass beyond it to the breadth (the unity) which lies outside. (When Rubinstein admitted that he "dropped enough notes under the piano to make a symphony," one of his pupils asked why the master insisted on his playing correctly: "Ah, my son," replied the master; "but I never 'dropped my notes' until I knew that I had them all at command if I wished.") The young mind needs definition, rightly enough, as a point of departure, a vantage ground from whence to follow out any clear track of thought of its own. We other people, well furnished with experience, have grown old enough to overstep barriers; we know they are there, but we can look across them to the beyond where lies "unity": but the barriers exist, and they have to be realised and faced afresh by every young mind, brought into contact with the opposing forces of *authority* and *freedom*; and if we elders are wise, we shall let our young people learn these lessons from ourselves, and not from outside, as they will otherwise be likely to do, if we neglect our opportunities. I do not know if I am exaggerating the lack of definite religious instruction for the "children of our churches," I feel sure I am not exaggerating the need of it. And evidently there is a growing tendency in our church life, as, for instance, in the Guilds of Fellowship, to desire acquaintance with some of our simpler free religious literature,

using it as material for study. I wonder how much it is used in home life (middle-class home life I mean). My impression is that, save by Postal Mission workers, this religious literature of ours is very little used or known by members of our provincial country congregations. And yet it would be an invaluable addition to the equipment of parents in directing the religious education of their children who have reached the "thinking stage" I spoke of. Many of these little volumes (such as, to give one example out of many, The Trinity and the Incarnation, by our late revered friend, Rev. R. A. Armstrong) are full of spiritual thought intertwined with the clear argument —they are written by our finest thinkers, and their service would be as valuable in the home as it is proving to be in the Guild Reading Circles. (And here, may I put in a hint to any Sunday school teachers of elder scholars who may not have adopted such a plan already for themselves. I have found it of considerable assistance to my bigger girls, who are also members of the Guild, to take in class the same book, which is being studied in the Guild, reading and talking it over just a chapter or two ahead of the portion chosen for discussion at the meeting. This enables them to take a much keener interest in the discussion, and even if they are too shy to raise their voices, and add to it, they feel as if they were really actively sharing in it, and not just standing on the outer edge as mere detached listeners. In this way a book of Fiske's (Man's Destiny), which, had they attempted to read it for themselves, would have proved dry and meaningless (owing to its appeal both in style and matter to the already trained intellect), was made intelligible to a group of bright girls, intelligent enough when helped, but naturally not mentally trained enough to study serious literature without help and incentive. And, if I may add one further detail of the same kind, at the opening of our Leicester Guild of Fellowship, some of us, recognising the small opportunity that many of our members had of getting hold of good, but simply written, free religious literature, laid in a selection of "Tracts for the Times," and arranged for their circulation, and the great interest aroused by these little "expositions" of our principles, with the ready way in which they were afterwards handed about to friends outside our body was quite refreshing.

Notwithstanding our rejection of creeds as authoritative doctrine, I am glad enough to make use of such simple statements of our beliefs as are conveyed in what go under the names of the "five beliefs," and the "Corner Stones," of our Unitarian Faith, out of which latter I use my privilege of rejecting such as do not seem to me suitable. I find them of great service in Sunday school teaching, as they serve to definitely fix these young girls' minds on some of the main principles of our faith. I find that they are both liked and appreciated, that they are always kept in memory, and that they are on occasion put to good service in defence of their church when, as is much commoner amongst the working people than in our own drawing-rooms, it is assailed. The Corner Stones are (as I gather from my scholars) sometimes hurled at the assailant, who decries the faith she knows nothing of. Brave enough are our working-girls, for they, at least, never shrink from "standing up" for the Church, and if we give them a definite argument to use they will use it without fear. But sometimes I think we fail to "give the right lead," in our anxiety not to "crystallise" belief. Consequently from the Sunday school also we lose adherents to our Church, through not taking enough into account the need young people feel of *practical guidance*. Would it be following too closely on orthodox lines if in each church containing young people, (some, alas, do not!) a course of preparatory training under the minister, for each girl and boy entering the threshold of responsible years, could be followed by a short form of service admitting them to full spiritual membership of the Church? We, who have outgrown the need of "props," perhaps forget what such moments may mean to the young, moments when a sense of spiritual enthusiasm and responsibility may be roused in their hearts such as they have never before felt.

But after all, these are only some of the means we may, or do, adopt to help our children to enter into the life of our churches; are but the details of church organisation;

and the full meaning of our desire to give them welcome entrance into the living faith for which our churches stand, is far greater than is covered by these details.

And as in infancy we would teach them those simple lessons which Christ gave to the world as the message he had received from the Father, so when they reach riper years we would impress on them the few essential principles on which our faith is grounded, and give them clear reason for our departure from the doctrines held by the great majority of Christians. Let us try to teach them that it is the principles we stand for, and not just the "ism." Whatever may happen to Unitarianism as a "sectional" belief, declared Martineau, "Christian liberty, love, and piety are our perpetual possession." Freedom, Truth, Simplicity, and Brotherhood, we may call our four great watchwords.

Freedom—to seek God, wherever He may be found, refusing to acknowledge the right of human authority to seek to impose a limit in mental and spiritual evolution. "Thus far, but no further" mayst thou question and strive to reach the heights.

We live: behind us the dark past; before
A wide way full of light that thou dost give;
More light, more strength, more joy, and ever more.

Truth—striving always to keep the mind open to new "lights of thought," secure in the belief that all light, all true knowledge is of God, and that behind the ruin and decay of the old outworn dogmas and outgrown "truths" the face of the Father is shining: standing firm on the certainty that God *is*, however dark the cloud that obscures, singing, as the psalmist of old sang, long before the existence of Christian doctrine, "The Lord is King, be the people never so impatient. He sitteth amidst the cherubims, be the earth never so unquiet."

Simplicity—in holding firmly to the fundamental truths taught by Christ as the sum of righteousness, as against the almost universal temptation to impose on his simple foundation of love, human and divine, a sacerdotal structure of salvation by doctrine, (encumbered by accessories raised to the rank of essential truths).

And Brotherhood—in that we claim that all are equally the sons of God—equal not by merit or by favour, but by virtue of the universal Fatherhood of which no folly, no ignorance, no evil doing, no denial even, can deprive any one of His children.

And it is in pursuance of the spirit of these great principles that we of the Free Churches refuse to bind ourselves with creeds, which we have learnt, serve rather to divide, than to unite mankind: seeking union only in our mutual acceptance of the leading principle of Love — and expressing it broadly, as it was expressed some quarter of a century ago, at the inauguration of the National Conference of all "Churches devoted to religious freedom": "These Churches accept the religion of Jesus, holding in accordance with his teaching, that practical religion is summed up in love to God and man." Practical religion—that bogey of the sacedotal mind to-day, which is dividing orthodoxy into separate fighting camps— is all, we feel, that may bear definition in terms. For the rest "God is a Spirit, and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth," and truly where the Spirit enters, the letter faileth; therefore we will not seek to define the divine Spirit, which inspires the mighty universe, in a form of words, before which human reason must consent to bow. We know, after all, that practical religion is impossible of application to daily life without some indwelling of the Spirit, whatever form that may take in us, and whether consciously or unconsciously employed. And what we must teach our young people is that this simple standpoint of our faith, "love to God and Man," demands not mere acquiescence, but conscious adherence and active service; that *freedom* and *truth* cannot be purchased by careless acceptance at second hand of others' belief in them, but must be sought by each one for himself, according to the measure of his own capacity; that *simplicity* does not include merely the standing apart from the clogging influences of convention, worldly or theological, but a perception of the singleness of the root truths underlying them, akin to that which was in Christ. And lastly that *brotherhood* is a great reality, not a mere pious term,—a conscious out-going of the best that lies in ourselves to all who are in need of help, of

sympathy, and of love. And in the face of these great fundamental truths, who among us will venture to say that there is nothing for Unitarians to teach their children?

Notes and Jottings.

It is the day of manifestoes and of discussions on great religious problems, not always, it must be confessed, according to knowledge. Evidently there is a growing number of thoughtful men in the Church of England, who feel that the time has come to plead for liberty to think and to study evidence in face of popular clamour and prejudice. A recent declaration by a number of clergy in favour of the open door for the historical study of the New Testament has aroused widespread interest. In itself the document is marked by the quiet gravity of its tone and the reasonableness of its proposals. It is real concern for the spiritual leadership of the Church and the intellectual status of the ministry, which has prompted it. It expresses a fear "lest the door of ordination should be closed to men who patiently and reverently apply historical methods to the Gospel records, and so an increasing number of men, both spiritually and intellectually qualified, should be lost to the high office of the ministry."

The declaration goes on to express the conviction "that it is not without grave responsibility and peril that many of us should build the faith of souls primarily upon details of New Testament narrative, the historical validity of which must ultimately be determined in the court of trained research." No particular narratives or doctrines are cited or called in question; the plea throughout is simply for a general attitude and for the recognition of the methods of historical study; but it has been assumed that an attack is meant upon the miraculous, and especially upon the Virgin Birth and the Resurrection. Instantly the wrath of Mrs. Partington against the Atlantic Ocean has been aroused. The most remarkable thing about the manifesto is the stupid clamour with which it has been received.

This clamour, however, has come mostly from the crowd to whose vehement ignorance the columns of the *Standard* have been more than hospitable. Some of those in high places are too frankly obscurantist even to be troubled. In a recent statement to Convocation the Archbishop of York has expressed himself with singular naïveté upon the soundness of the clergy in the faith. He has made inquiries, and he has discovered that only a very few persons without any claim to importance or special influence are heretical. It is accordingly unnecessary for him to say anything or to make any pronouncement when all is so safe and comfortable in his snug clerical world. Indirectly he has passed the condemnation of episcopal indifference upon the whole intellectual attitude of the petitioning clergy. They are small people, he says in effect, and we need not trouble.

The correspondence in the *Standard* shows at any rate one thing, namely, that the public mind is many degrees less drowsy than that of the Archbishop of York. It has been on the whole a rather pitiful exhibition of the extraordinary vehemence of religious prejudice. In so far as it is a revelation of average intelligence, without special knowledge or training, it has its very distressing side, for it is enough to create despair of quiet reasonableness in English religion. On the other hand this noisy glorification of ignorance in the name of faith shows in itself how widespread is the feeling of unrest. We are in the throes of great changes, and the men who believe that no advance of knowledge can undermine the spiritual foundations of life or destroy Christianity may possess their souls in patience.

The majority of letters in the *Standard* have been on one side, though here and there another voice has managed to make itself heard. The following rejected letter has been sent to us for publication, and we are glad to have such an admirable statement of some of the deeper issues involved in the whole controversy:—

To the Editor of the Standard.

Sir,—In to-day's issue of the *Standard* your correspondent Medicus II. has admir-

ably stated the constructive aim of the upholders of the "Higher Criticism" when he says: "If a man's faith be worthy, it should comprise the whole man. Not, for instance, his 'heart' only, but his brain, too." The conclusion of the letter is a noble vindication of the right and duty of man to live in "Light, Love, Life," not in two elements of this inseparable Trinity alone. In the Church of the Future, struggling to be born, may not "the stone which the builders refused" (*i.e.*, Light) become "the headstone of the corner?" Such a church would be composed of "the blessed company of all faithful people"—faithful to Light, faithful to Love, and faithful to the Life which is the outcome of the union of these two.

That such a church *is* struggling to be born, the present discussion is a hopeful and convincing sign. The only feature of the correspondence which makes one sad is the evident misapprehension which the opponents of the "Higher Criticism" are frequently under as to its aims; largely, I suspect, owing to the pitfalls of language, and the need of defining the premisses in an argument. They speak as if Truth were of God and of the Devil, whereas surely it is one and indivisible. What conflict can there be between Faith and Reason? for what is diviner than Truth? If our conceptions of her prove too narrow, is it not in order that a fuller and holier revelation may take their place? Whatever the ultimate Reality may be, we are certain it cannot be *less* august and holy than our dreams. Those which were founded on "miracle" are only being displaced to subside into a yet deeper foundation of miracle, beside which the wisest bow their heads in presence of that "spirit of Truth which shall guide us into all truth." Surely, those who are supposed to be the leaders of our spiritual life should throw themselves in confidence on the progressive spirit of Jesus Christ's teaching, and remember that He, of all others, was no formalist, but was continually re-setting the ancient landmarks in the light of a nearer communion with His Father and ours.

While waiting for the Church to be reborn in a manner which shall include and welcome all "the faithful" (faithful in mind as well as in heart) let us never forget that He said "Where two or three are gathered together in My name," (*i.e.*, in the name of Truth, Holiness, and Love) "there am I in the midst of them."

If this correspondence should prove the forerunner of suggestions towards a Church of the future, based on the above principle, it will meet a deep need.

I am, sir, your obedient servant,

D. H.

National Conference Guilds' Union.

The fourth annual meeting of the Guilds' Union was held at the Great Meeting, Leicester, on Easter Tuesday, April 25. There was a good gathering of Guild members and friends. The business meeting was held in the schoolroom, in the afternoon, the President of the Union, Rev. Joseph Wood, being in the chair. General regret was expressed at the absence of Rev. E. W. Lummis, and an affectionate message of sympathy and good wishes was sent to him.

The Rev. Gordon Cooper read the Council's report, which referred to the resignation, at the last annual meeting held at Kidderminster, of the secretaryship by the Rev. John Ellis, and expressed warm appreciation of his services, not only in inaugurating the Union, but in acting as its Secretary for the first three years. The Council had decided to continue the Prize Essay scheme for another year, but only twelve essays were sent in from four guilds. The examiners' awards were given. In further endeavour to promote religious reading and serious study among Guild members, the Council decided to recommend the formation of reading circles, and the idea had been acted upon in some Guilds, and the meetings had proved interesting and helpful.

The number of Guilds affiliated to the Union was 29. New Guilds had been formed at Nottingham, Dewsbury, Walthamstow, and Bermondsey, and it was hoped they would shortly join the Union. Following the example of the London Guilds, a union of local Guilds had been formed in the Atherton district, comprising the Guilds of Atherton, Leigh, Astley, and Swinton. The Council had pleasure in announcing that the Rev. F. K. Freeston and the Secretary had undertaken the preparation of a new Guilds' Year Book for 1906, to be published in the autumn of the present year. The retiring President, the Rev. Joseph Wood, was warmly thanked for all he had done for the Guild movement.

The Treasurer, Mr. H. P. Greg, presented his accounts, which showed a small balance in hand.

In moving the adoption of the reports, the Chairman confessed to a certain feeling of dis-

appointment at the slow growth of the Guild movement in this country, when compared with the corresponding institutions in America; but there was much to encourage those who were interested in the work of the Guilds, and he was particularly pleased with the results of the essay competition. Mr. Wood went on to speak of the charm of young life—of its unknown possibilities, and its dangers. It was not given to everyone to be a Beethoven or a Watts, but greatness of character was possible for all, and they had to remind young people that there was such a thing as heroic will; that they were their own keepers, and must work out their own destiny.

The adoption of the reports was seconded by Rev. Charles Hargrove, who said that success must not be judged by members only. The question we must ask ourselves was not, have we succeeded? But have we done our best? If we put our best efforts into our work, then all would be well. The Rev. F. K. Freeston was elected President in succession to Rev. Joseph Wood, who has held the office since the formation of the Union, four years ago. On the proposition of Rev. H. Gow, seconded by Mr. A. H. Paget, the heartiest thanks of the meeting were given to the outgoing President for his past services. It would be impossible to exaggerate the services he had rendered.

The business meeting was followed by a conference, at which Rev. Alfred Hall spoke on "The Relation of the Guild to the Church and the Sunday School." Mr. Hall is warden of a large and successful Guild at Norwich, and his address, which was based upon his own experience, was full of valuable hints and helpful suggestions. In dealing with the question, How to stop the leakage of young people from our churches and schools, Mr. Hall advocated the establishment of a Roll Book, in which the names of all the young people—the names, *i.e.*, of all children of members of the church—and of all Sunday school scholars over sixteen years of age—should be registered. Personality, however, was better than all organisation, and what our churches wanted was laymen who would interest themselves in the young people of the church and school. And he gave as an instance the work of John Withers Dowson at Norwich. Mr. Hall recommended the institution of Junior Guilds, for the management of which the members of the Senior Guild should be held responsible; and he strongly urged that the Guild should undertake some definite work on behalf of the church. It was good to give them responsibility and to get them to make some special effort. The members of the Guild at Norwich had made themselves responsible for one penny a week, and this, in two years, had resulted in nearly £50 being added to the Building Fund. Mr. Hall was quite prepared to make concessions to the young people; in addition to meetings for serious study and religious culture it was well, he said, to arrange others of a lighter character, for we have to teach young people what things to enjoy and how to enjoy them. At Norwich they had evenings devoted to "Hobbies," "Curiosities," "Competitions," "Nature and the Camera," etc. Two things, he concluded, were essential if we would retain our hold over our young people. We must have sympathy with them in their religious struggles and in their daily work; in return for this sympathy they would work for the church. And we must have faith in them and try to inspire them with confidence in themselves.

The Chairman, Rev. A. H. Dolphin, Mr. Perris, Mr. Richard Robinson, and Mrs. Wallace Bruce all bore testimony to the value and helpfulness of Mr. Hall's paper, and heartily thanked him for his address.

In the evening the annual service was held in the Great Meeting, when a large congregation assembled. The service was conducted by the Rev. Gertrud von Petzold, and the sermon was preached by the Rev. Charles Hargrove, who took for his text Paul's answer to the jailor's question: "What must I do to be saved?"—"Believe on the Lord Jesus, and thou shalt be saved." Mr. Hargrove drew a vivid picture of the scene in the jail, and then went on to say they might be sure that Paul taught the jailor no doctrine of a Trinity, and expounded no scheme of salvation. If a man today, troubled with religious difficulties and theological doubts, was advised to "Believe in Dr. Martineau," or if another man, uncertain how to cast his vote, was told to "Believe in Mr. Chamberlain," we should be in no danger of misunderstanding the advice. Accept Dr. Martineau as your guide and teacher, and your theological difficulties will disappear. So believe in Christ—not in any doctrine as to the person of Christ, nor in any stories which have grown up round his name, but believe in Christ, and accept him as your teacher, and you'll be saved. And this was the message Mr. Hargrove gave to his fellow Guild members. Believe in Christ; believe what Jesus taught about love to God, and love to man. Let them love God; such love would save them, would reconcile them to their environment, and bring peace to their souls. Let them love man; such love would save them from envy, hatred, and all uncharitableness. But there was a danger to guard against—our religion must not develop into mere sentiment. Christ severely condemned the substitution of sentiment for true religion. "He that doeth the will of my Father shall enter into the kingdom of Heaven." In the parable of the sheep and the goats there is no judgment of belief: the test is have they, or have they not, been of service to others? This law of service is the law of life. It was no creed, no subscription, no common name, that bound them together as Guild members. The bond that united them was the declaration of their belief in the Lord Jesus, their acceptance of Jesus as their teacher, as the teacher of love to God, and love to man, proved by the service of man, which is the only service God requires.

News from the Field.

The *Rev. W. C. Hall, M.A.*, has received a warm welcome on commencing his great task at *Small Heath, Birmingham*, and he will find himself supported by a band of zealous workers. The *Rev. John Evans, B.A.*, after receiving parting gifts from his friends at *Bolton*, has been greeted by the *Rev. C. J. Street* and others on the beginning of his ministry at *Colne*. The *Rev. W. H. Burgess, B.A.*, leaving *Accrington* amid the regrets of his people, has agreed to take up the double work of the congregations at *Ilkeston* and *Loughborough*. His task will be a difficult one, but he will face it boldly. *Mr. W. J. Bushrod*, after arduous work as a lay preacher in the South of England, has entered upon the ministry of the old congregation at *Chorley*, and his friends will follow his work there with great interest. *Mr. C. M. Wright, B.A.*, of *M. College, Oxford*, has agreed to take the high duty of Assistant Minister to the *Rev. J. Wood*, at *Birmingham*. The young student is to be congratulated on the call to so great a work, under the guidance of a leader like the minister of the *Old Meeting, Birmingham*.

The *Rev. S. S. Brettell, M.A.*, has resigned his ministry at *Maidstone*, and *Dr. Warschauer* is leaving *Clifton* to take up a Collegiate Charge in the Congregational Church at *Anerley*. This is a bold venture, but the young Doctor is a bold man, and may be relied upon for discretion as well as boldness in his new sphere. But the most significant resignation of the month is that of the venerable and respected minister of *Stannington*, who, after 63 years of service in our churches, at last lays down his beloved work that he may have a brief rest in the closing days of his honourable career. God's peace be with him!

Some of our friends have again been showing their beneficial activity by holding Bazaars, in which they have gathered in golden harvests. We have no details of what was gained at *Torquay*, but we hear good reports; while *Preston* tells of receiving £402, and *Hunstett* has secured the useful sum of £135.

South Shore, Blackpool, without a Bazaar, has had its debt of £339 wiped away by the conjoint gifts of *Messrs. J. P. and C. C. Grundy*, and so our friends there go forward unincumbered by debt. This example might be followed by other good friends in various parts of the country, to the enrichment of their own souls and the advancement of our cause.

We rejoice to note the energy which is being shown by the friends of the *College* in *Manchester*. The fund is creeping up towards the desired amount, and the congregations throughout the country are showing their appreciation of the good work which the College has done, and is doing.

Both our Sunday School and our Missionary organisations are giving signs of growing activity and usefulness. The *North Midland S.S. Association*, at *Sheffield*, the *Manchester District Association*, at *Monton*, the *Midland Association*, at *Hurst Street, Birmingham*, and the *Bury Association*, at *Ainsworth*, all have given a good account of themselves, and shown that Sunday School is engaging growing attention among our people, and commanding growing support. The workers are earnest and devoted, and the work is prospering in their hands.

The same may be said of our varied Missionary activities. We have read, with interest, the accounts given of the *Southern Unitarian Association*, at *Poole*, of the *South-East Wales Association*, at *Cardiff*, of the *District Association*, in *London;* while the Circular Letter of the *Manchester Association* attracts us by its grasp of social questions, and the Special Mission at *Kilmarnock*, conducted by the *Revs. Dr. Warschauer* and *Dr. Hunter* opens out new possibilities of co-work by religious thinkers who will work together for the Common Religion and the Common Good.

The Martineau Celebrations at *Norwich, Oxford, Rochdale*, and other places have been profoundly interesting, and have called forth an amount of sympathy and appreciation that is gratifying to every lover of all that is deepest in reverence, and Catholic in Religion. We have reason to know that in many congregations all over the country, if not throughout the Christian world, testimony has been borne to the great and inspiring work which our Great Thinker has done, and is doing, for the uplifting of men's thoughts and the sanctification of their lives. One of the best things which has been done has been the publication of *Mr. Carpenter's* excellent book on the life of Martineau, and we are sure it will command a wide acceptance.

The *Guilds Union* continues to do a good work and its influence is extending among the young people in our various congregations.

We note with deep sympathy and full appreciation the passing away from earthly service of the *Rev. Peter Dean* and of *Miss Jane C. Fallows*, both of them faithful workers for all good things. The *Rev. J. C. Street* preached to a most appreciative congregation a memorial sermon at *Walsall*, where the long years of useful and honourable service of Mr. Dean are most gratefully remembered.

And so our brief tale of changes, work, and advancements—of successes, losses, and gains—of rejoicings and sorrows and hopes ends once more, and we go forward with brave and earnest souls to the work lying at our hands, and lose no jot of heart or hope as we follow the leading of the Spirit of God.

SCRUTATOR.

May 18th, 1905.

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